



# Voting Information News

May 2004 ☞ Vol. 14, No. 5

*A roundup of voting news from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP)  
For voters, potential voters and those who assist voters.*

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## Voting Assistance Officers

### "To Do" This Month:

☑ Contact your Service Voting Action Officer (contact information on page 3) to see if a Voting Assistance Officer Workshop is scheduled to be conducted in or near your area. All Voting Assistance Officers are required to attend a workshop or complete Voting Assistance Officer training.

☑ Voting Assistance Officer training is available through the FVAP website, [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov). For more information go to <http://www.fvap.gov/vao/workshops.html>.

☑ Encourage participation in state primary elections. An updated list of primary elections is available on the FVAP website at <http://www.fvap.gov/public/primarycal.html>.

☑ Visit the FVAP's website at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov) often for up-to-date information and materials.

## Having Difficulty Obtaining the FPCA?

The Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) (Standard Form 76) may be obtained from your Voting Assistance Officer in your unit, American organizations overseas, or U.S. Embassies and Consulates. If you are not able to obtain the FPCA you may use the On-line FPCA (OFPCA).

**The OFPCA is accepted by all States and Territories except American Samoa and Guam.**

To obtain the OFPCA visit the FVAP website at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov) and select "On-line Federal Post Card Application" under "Publications and Forms". (see illustration below)

### Publications and Forms

- [State by State Instructions](#)
- [On-line Federal Post Card Application](#)

(Image extracted from FVAP website)

The OFPCA is in Adobe Acrobat® format and can be downloaded and viewed from your personal computer. If you do not have Acrobat Reader®, you may download it from the FVAP website.

The form can be completed on-line, printed out, signed, dated, placed in an envelope with proper postage affixed and then mailed to the appropriate Local Election Official in your state (for addresses see WHERE TO SEND IT in your state's section of the *Guide* available under [State by State Instructions](#) on the FVAP website).

The OFPCA can also be printed out

blank and completed on a typewriter or by hand in blue or black ink following the same guidelines as above (completing this form on-line will help eliminate delays caused by illegible handwriting). When completing the OFPCA, please refer to the *2004-05 Voting Assistance Guide* or select the first bullet, [State by State Instructions](#), (see illustration above), to download the instructions for your state.

Unlike the postage-paid cardstock FPCA, users of the OFPCA must affix postage on the envelope before mailing the form. The OFPCA is being provided as a convenience and as a time-saving alternative when you cannot get the postage-paid cardstock FPCA through other means and to ensure that you do not miss the opportunity to register or make timely request for a ballot. You are entitled to get the postage-paid FPCA. You may request a copy from a Voting Assistance Officer or directly from the Federal Voting Assistance Program.

### Do not use photocopies of the FPCA.

There are several legitimate reasons why States do not accept photocopies of a voter registration application. Among these are problems of insufficient paper weight stock and copy quality.

Many State laws require that the local election officials keep a hard copy of the voter registration application to provide a trail to establish voter identification through signature verification. In some instances, these documents must be transferred from the election office to the polling places for each election.

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### "To Do" This Month (continued):

☒ Ensure that people know how to get in touch with you for voting assistance. Provide the installation or Embassy/Consulate telephone operator your name and contact information to refer callers requiring voting assistance.

☒ Voting Assistance Officers should start planning for "Overseas Citizens Voters Week" (July 4-10, 2004) and "Armed Forces Voters Week" (September 3-11, 2004). The objective is to create excitement, awareness and motivation to participate in the November General election. VAOs should organize voting workshops and registration drives to be conducted during these periods.

☒ "Absentee Voting Week" will be held October 11-15, 2004. During this week, VAOs should encourage voters to vote and mail their absentee ballots so they arrive by the deadline for their receipt.

## North Dakota - Absentee Voting Guidelines, a Best Practice

North Dakota has published a brochure titled "[Military and Overseas Voters](http://www.state.nd.us/sec/forms/pdf/military.pdf)". This brochure provides guidelines on absentee voting for North Dakota residents covered under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA). We are publishing excerpts of this brochure, which we consider an excellent example for other states that may want to follow suit. You may download a copy of this brochure at <http://www.state.nd.us/sec/forms/pdf/military.pdf>.

"Dear Members of the Armed Forces,

Hello, I'm Al Jaeger, North Dakota's Secretary of State and the state's chief election official.

Elections allow us to exercise one of our most fundamental rights – the right to vote. Elections give us a voice in our state and national politics, they encourage us to take an active interest in our schools and neighborhoods, and permit us to speak out on issues and causes of interest and importance.

In North Dakota, voting is made very easy through absentee voting and early voting.

Voting is especially accessible in North Dakota since voters are not required to register before voting.

I encourage members of our armed forces to take advantage of the ease of voting in North Dakota during this election year! And, for those members who are not residents of North Dakota, I encourage you to participate in your home state through the absentee voting process.

Al Jaeger  
North Dakota  
Secretary of State"

**"Applications for absentee ballots may be delivered to the appropriate county auditor by mail, in person, or by fax. Certain overseas military personnel and citizens may also receive and return voted ballots by fax according to North Dakota law. For more information, please consult with your voting assistance officer, the Secretary of State's office, or your county auditor."** ☒

## Having Difficulty Obtaining the FPCA? (continued)

These offices have found that regular Xerox weight photocopy paper will not provide the file durability that they need for the application document. The varying quality of photocopied images can also present a major problem.

This is especially true since a poor quality photocopy can result in an almost unreadable image of the application document and/or signature if it is electronically scanned.

**You may be able to FAX your OFPCA.** Click on [State by State Instructions](#) on the FVAP website (see illustration on page 1) to find out if your State allows faxing. If so, the registration and/or request for absentee ballot process can be completed in a matter of minutes. See

appendix C of the *Guide* for additional information on Electronic Transmission of Election Materials. You may also click on "Publications and Forms" from the FVAP website to download Appendix C (see illustration on page 1). Click on the image of the *Guide*, and then click on "Appendices".

**After faxing, the original should always be mailed to the Local election Official.**

At present, there are no provisions to allow for submission of the FPCA through the Internet since States require an original signature on the application. For further details, please visit the FVAP Website at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov) or email the FVAP at [vote@fvap.ncr.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.ncr.gov). ☒

## Guard, Reservists Voting Absentee

Members of the National Guard and the Reserve components are subject to short-notice military orders that take them away from their voting residences for days, weeks or months at a time. If these time periods coincide with election days, the members should take steps to exercise their right to participate in the electoral process. Following is guidance for Guard and Reserve members to ensure they are enfranchised during an election while they are away from their homes (legal voting residence).

There are two main circumstances under which a Guard or Reserve member may be unable to vote in person at their local polling place due to their military status.

- ❑ The member may be assigned temporarily away from his or her legal residence or in a situation where he or she cannot leave the duty station in order to vote in person on Election Day.
- ❑ The member may be activated or mobilized and be away from his or her residence on a more permanent basis.

These circumstances require different courses of action by the member to be able to vote by absentee ballot.

**Assigned Temporarily:** As soon a Guard or Reserve member knows that he or she will be temporarily absent and unable to vote in person at his or her polling place on election day, the member should contact the local election official (LEO), usually the town or county clerk, to determine the local process for requesting an absentee ballot covered under state laws. Contact information for the LEO is available on the FVAP website at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov). Select "State Election Sites", and then select the state of voting residence.

The member should explain the circumstances why he or she is unable to vote in person and provide an address to where the absentee ballot should be mailed. This address may be the

member's residence where he or she may vote their absentee ballot before departing to the military assignment. Some states also have special periods before election day during which citizens can go to specified locations and vote in person.

It is important that the member make arrangements in advance in order to either vote early or vote by absentee ballots using state procedures. There are deadlines that must be met to make these arrangements that are imposed by law or practicality. **The member must take into consideration the time it will take for the LEO to transmit the absentee ballot to the member and the time necessary to return the voted absentee ballot to the local election office.** Absentee ballots must be received by the LEO by a specified time in order to be counted.

**Activated or Mobilized:** A Guard or Reserve member who has been activated or mobilized and will be away from home station during election day will follow absentee voting procedures covered under the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizen Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)*. Refer also to the DoD Voting Action Plan and DoD Directive 1000.4 for the support to be provided to active and Reserve component members while deployed. These documents are available on the FVAP website. Select "Voting Assistance Information".

The member should submit a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)(SF-76), which serves simultaneously as registration and absentee ballot request, to their LEO. The FPCA is available from the unit or installation Voting Assistance Officer (VAO) and should be submitted immediately upon notification of activation or mobilization. Use the individual State instructions on chapter 3 of the *2004-05 Voting Assistance Guide* when completing the FPCA. The FVAP website also contains [State by State Instructions](#).

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### Voting Action Officers

#### Department of State: Office of Overseas Citizens Services

Chief VAO: Mr. Jack Markey, **tel:** (202) 736-4937, **fax:** (202) 647-6201, **E-mail:** markeyjd@state.gov  
Deputy VAO: Ms. Bonita Harris, **tel:** (202) 647-5435, **fax:** (202) 647-6201, **E-mail:** harrisbg@state.gov

#### Service Voting Action Officers

**U.S. Dept. of the Army:** Mr. James Davis **tel:** (703) 325-4530 **DSN:** 221-4530; **fax:** (703) 325-4532  
**DSN fax:** 221-4532; **E-mail:** davisj@hoffman.army.mil,  
<https://www.perscomonline.army.mil/tagd/pssd/psb/voting/votingindex.htm>

**U.S. Dept. of the Navy:** LCDR Mark Lofton **tel:** 1-866-U-ASK-NPC (827-5672); **DSN:** 882-4606, **fax:** (901) 874-2785,  
**DSN fax:** 882-2785; **E-mail:** MILL\_navyvote@navy.mil, <http://www.persnet.navy.mil/nvap>

**U.S. Dept. of the Air Force:** Lt. Col. Lee Shick **tel:** (210) 565-2338 (MSgt. Julie Schlip), **toll free:** 1-866-229-7074 (select option 4, then 6 from menu), **DSN:** 665-2338; **fax:** (210) 565-2543, **DSN fax:** 665-2543;  
**E-mail:** afpc/dpsfvotingpgmdlist@randolph.af.mil; <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/votefund/>

**U.S. Marine Corps:** GySgt Kenneth B. Warford **tel:** (703) 784-9511, **DSN:** 278-9511;  
**fax:** (703) 784-9827, **DSN fax:** 278-9827; **E-mail:** warfordkb@manpower.usmc.mil  
[https://lnweb1.manpower.usmc.mil/manpower/mi/mra\\_ofct.nsf/mrp/Voting+Home](https://lnweb1.manpower.usmc.mil/manpower/mi/mra_ofct.nsf/mrp/Voting+Home)

**U.S. Coast Guard:** YNCS Lori McNaught **tel:** (202)-267-1636, **fax:** (202) 267-4823;  
**E-mail:** LMcNaught@comdt.uscg.mil, [http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/g-wp/g-wpm-1/VotingAssistance/Voting\\_Assistance.htm](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/g-wp/g-wpm-1/VotingAssistance/Voting_Assistance.htm)

All of the above can also be reached through the DoD Voting Information Center and the FVAP Website.

**Federal Voting  
Assistance Program**

Department of Defense  
Washington Headquarters  
Services  
1155 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC  
20301-1155

PHONE:  
(703) 588-1584  
DSN 425-1584

FAX:  
(703) 588-0108  
DSN 425-0108

VOTING INFORMATION  
CENTER:  
(703) 588-1343  
DSN 425-1343

TOLL FREE:  
1-800-438-VOTE (8683)

*Visit our website for  
international toll-free phone  
and fax numbers.*

E-MAIL:  
vote@fvap.ncr.gov

Website:  
www.fvap.gov

**Vote!****Guard, Reservists Voting Absentee (continued)**

The LEOs usually mail absentee ballots beginning 45-30 days prior to the election. Again, the member should take into consideration the time necessary to receive the blank ballot and return their voted ballot to the LEO by the state deadline.

If members do not yet have an address where they are to receive their ballot, they may complete the FPCA and take it with them to their deployed location. Upon arriving they should enter the address and immediately mail the FPCA. Many states allow some form of electronic transmission of election materials, either the FPCA, the blank ballot, or even, in some cases, the voted ballot. See the *Guide* or select [State by State Instructions](#) from the FVAP website for details.

The member may also obtain the FPCA at their deployed station from the Installation or Unit VAO or may use the online FPCA (OFPCA). Download the OFPCA from the FVAP website by selecting [On-line Federal Post Card Application](#). The member may also contact their LEO to determine what alternatives are available in order to receive, vote and return the absentee ballot on time for it to be counted. If assistance is not available at the deployed location, Guard and Reserve members may contact the FVAP (contact information on previous page).

What can be done if it is getting close to the election and the Guard or Reserve member has not yet received their absentee ballot? If a member is outside the U.S. or using an APO/FPO address and has requested but not received their state absentee ballot, he or she can use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) (SF-186) to cast their vote for candidates for Federal offices. See the *Guide* or [State by State Instructions](#) for requirements and additional details.

**It's your future, Vote for it!** Thanks to Joseph Logan, Fort Dix, for his contribution to this article. ☒

**CHANGES FROM THE STATES** Please update your files and *Voting Assistance Guide* as applicable.

**NORTH CAROLINA:** The North Carolina Board of Elections has changed the Presidential and State primary elections to July 20, 2004. These primaries were originally scheduled for May 4, 2004. The run-off primary date, if necessary, is now August 17, 2004.

**FLORIDA:** New Address for Supervisor of Elections, Suwannee County, 200 Pine Avenue SW, Live Oak, FL 32064 ☒



**Federal Voting Assistance Program**  
Department of Defense  
1155 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1155

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